"MAIDEN MONA THE MERMAID"

TORONTO,

BELFORD BROTHERS.

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A Fairy Play for Fairy People.

MAIDEN MONA THE MERMAID.

A Fairy Play for Fairy People.

BY

F. A. D.

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TO THE

CHILDREN OF THEIR EXCELLENCIES,

THE EARL AND COUNTESS OF DUFFERIN.

THE

Merry Little Party of Actors,

FOR

Whose Christmas Fun these Plays are Written,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME,

With this as sole excuse for its nonsense,

IS

Affectionately Dedicated.

87706

MAIDEN MONA THE MERMAID.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

—o—

THE GNOME KING.—*A penniless potentate who used to play first fiddle, but has lost his key.*

O'ROOSTER THE AUDACIOUS.—*High Cockolorum. Master of the (rocking) Horse. First Lord of the Shaving Brush. Gold Stick in w(h)aiting to the King, and a warm stick, in plaster to Coquettina, Q.E.D. ; R.S.V.P. ; R.I.P. ; etc., etc., etc.*

GENERAL BOUNCE.—*No relation to General De Billy Tee.*

CAPTAIN POUNC —*Not Kept-in-pounds, shillings and pence, alas! Too poor to "mawwy."*

NOODLE, DOODLE. } *Twins and orphans ; without, strange to say, a single parent left, (of course, a single pair ain't right.) Their prospects, however, are in a fine pickle, which is something.*

MONA THE MERMAID.—*Only a mer(e)maid she.*
The Queen of dainty, wee things.
Fresh from the seething waves.
The last sweet thing in sea things.

M-R-T-N T-PP-R.

COQUETTINA.—*The Maid of the Mil(itary). Such a pet!*

THE FAIRY OF THE FOREST.—"*The sweet little cherub who sits up aloft*
And takes care of the life of poor Jack."
(Mr. Noodle.)

SH-K-SP-R.

CORALINA.—*A duodecimo edition of a darling.*

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE OTTAWA

New Year's Day, 1877.

THE GNOME KING	HON. TERENCE BLACKWOOD.
O'ROOSTER THE AUDACIOUS	MR. EDWARD LITTLETON.
GENERAL BOUNCE	MR. ALGERNON LITTLETON.
CAPTAIN POUNCE	HON. BASIL BLACKWOOD.
NOODLE	CAPTAIN WARD, A.D.C.
DOODLE	CAPTAIN HAMILTON, A.D.C.
MONA THE MERMAID	LADY HELEN BLACKWOOD.
COQUETTINA	MISS MARGARET LITTLETON.
THE FAIRY OF THE FOREST	LADY HERMIONE BLACKWOOD.
CORALINA	LADY VICTORIA BLACKWOOD.

SCENE I.

Cavern on the Sea Coast by Moonlight.—Opening in Rocks at Back, showing Sea.—The Waves are Rising and Running into Mouth of Cavern.—Introductory Music Descriptive of Storm; Thunder Heard Behind.—Music Gradually Changes to Soft Measured Air as Curtain Rises.—Prince Doodle Discovered Lying on Rocks at Back. R. C. as though Cast up by the Waves.—Enter through Opening Mona.—She Comes Down, Combing Her Hair with a Golden Comb through the following:—

MONA. Why, what a dreadful stormy night we're getting,
It's well for me I do not mind a wetting!
Full fathom five below those crested waves
No tempests ever stir *our* coral caves.
We hear no thunder far below the sea;
The mermaids' haunt is still as still can be;
In fact it's rather dull sometimes down there,
And so I come up here and comb my hair.

(*Moves towards back*).

To-night, alas! another ship went down,
I cannot bear to see poor sailors drown.

(*Sees Prince Doodle*).

Good gracious! What is this? As I am alive,
Why, it's a man! I know it is!

(*Steps hurriedly on rock as though going to plunge into sea.*)

I'll dive!
I won't! (*comes down*) I will! (*goes up*) No!
(*Hesitates*) Shall I? Will it bite?
It's not a shark? (*goes up and peeps, comes back holding hand to heart*) It's put me in a fright.
Mona! you silly goose! This palpitation
Is strange perhaps, but not a bad sensation.
I rather like it. Is it fear? No question!
I'm not afraid! Perhaps it's indigestion?
I'll take another peep.

(*Goes to Prince on tip toe, and comes away rapidly, clapping her hands*).

He's charming, really!
If I could take him home I'd like to dearly.
How nice he'd be to play with! Shall I try?
He's fast asleep! I'm sure he wouldn't die.

(*Tries to raise him. He groans.*)

His clothes are wet, perhaps he's shipwrecked, too.

(*Prince slowly sits up holding his hand to his side*).

Good evening, sir. (*Curtesying*).

PRINCE DOODLE. Good evening. How d'ye do?

(*Rises with difficulty and comes forward*).

Where am I? Who are you? What's this? (*Feels water.*) It's water!

MONA. This is the Norway coast, and I'm its daughter.
Young sir, you're wet! your coat——
Might be a better 'un.
I'm *young;* but still you won't find here a *wetter* 'un.

MONA. Tell me your tale, for stories I love well.

PRINCE DOODLE. Story; why bless you! I have none to tell;
Only last night, a-sailing on the ocean,
There came a squall, at least so I've a notion.
It stormed! it blew! it rained! the lightning crashed!
We pitched and rolled, (*imitates motion of ship*) and tossed, the thunder flashed;
The wind, it rose and howled, and so did we.

MONA. That's very queer!

PRINCE DOODLE. Things often are at sea.
"Cut down the starboard stays'l!" cried I. Then
"Splice the jib-boom, there, to the cross-trees, men!"
(*Speaks excitedly, suiting action to words, and using hands as speaking trumpet,*)
"Stand by to hoist the to'gallant sheet anchor!
Take a pull on the weather lee scuppers, my hearties!
Let the mizzen binnacle go with a run!

MONA. (*Clapping her hands with delight.*)
I like to hear you talk. Go on! What fun!

PRINCE DOODLE. (*Disgusted at interruption.*)
That's all.

MONA. (*Disappointed.*) That's not the end?

PRINCE DOODLE. 'Twon't take a minnit.
The ship she gave a lurch; and—left us in it.
Then to a hen coop clung the crew of forty-five;

MONA. They're drowned? (*clasping her hands in horror*).

PRINCE DOODLE. Oh, not at all; they're all alive.
They flew away.

MONA. What, men!

PRINCE DOODLE, No; geese, my dear!
I'm rather mixed. Perhaps my head is queer.
Listen, and I'll a tale unfold to harrow——

MONA. (*Shrinking back*)
Ah! Don't!

PRINCE DOODLE. A tale to fr-r-r-r-eeze——

MONA. Oh, dear!

PRINCE DOODLE. Your marrow!

PRINCE DOODLE. (*Loud chord, and tremulo music through the following.*)
I have an uncle!

MONA. Not uncommon, surely.

PRINCE DOODLE. Some years ago, my poor papa felt poorly;
Took to his bed, and—died—they say most queerly.
My uncle deals in magic? See you?

MONA. Clearly !

PRINCE DOODLE. My parent gone, th' apparent heir was I !
To gain the throne he wished that I should die.
And then, because I couldn't see why he,
Instead of I, the nation's king should be ;
He shipped me off, alone, to go to *see*,
Alone I said ! not so ! off was I cast
With four and forty geese before the mast !
His parting words were these :—" Return, my dear,
(Of course the whole thing was a jibe and sneer)
" When'ere a mermaid's heart you hold in hand,
" And four and forty men before me stand,
" In place of all these geese I send as crew.
" 'Till then—' O reservoir !' my boy ! adieu !"

MONA. Oh ! what a dreadful man !

PRINCE DOODLE. He seized my brother ;
And swore we ne'er again should see each other
Until this mermaid I should meet, so kind,
And then a mountain full of diamonds find.
The thing is absurd ! There are no mermaids here,
My uncle has the thr*own* ; I'm *pitched out* clear !

MONA. The diamond mountain of the Gnome King, see
(*Points off L.*)
It's full of diamonds : full as full can be.

PRINCE DOODLE. What's that you say ? That mountain ! It's all rock.

Diamonds inside! Oh, come! you only mock!
I'd like to see my brother—

MONA. What's your name?

PRINCE DOODLE. Oh! I'm a Prince, Prince Doodle.

MONA. What a shame!

PRINCE DOODLE. My kingdom's in Cockagne, you must have heard
Of Cock-a-doodle-do. (*She shakes head.*) That noble bird
Was a remote progenitor. Indeed,
Our pedigree, by Darwin, you can read.

MONA. I never learnt to read. Stay! (*puts fingers to forehead*) on me dawns,
A notion (*triumphantly*) that's where people live
"*en Prince?*" (*pronounce "on prawns."*)

PRINCE DOODLE. (*Aside.*) *A notion* fishy! (*Aloud.*) No, my dear, on *shrimps!*
Your friends?—They're?——

MONA. Mermaids.

PRINCE DOODLE. *water-"nimps?"*
Why *w(h)at a*—(*looks towards her feet*) *tail?*
Forgive the observation,
Is there not something queer in your formation?
(*Hesitatingly.*) You don't wear boots and shoes? (*aside*)
Ah, that a fix is!
They *can't* of course!

MONA. Why not? My numbers "sixes."
You never heard of *soles* and *eels?*

PRINCE DOODLE. Yes, fried!

MONA. Around our grottoes, there('s) *sea-horses('s)*
hide.
For *bark*——you've heard the "moaning of the *tied,*"
And *hide* and *bark* make leather, eh?

PRINCE DOODLE. Of course!
(*Aside*) I've traced my *nightmare* up to its *sea-horse;*
A mermaid! Here's my chance! (*Aloud.*) Dear me!
How stupid!
(*Aside.*) Now aid me, Venus!

MONA. (*Overhearing aside.*) Venus! He must be
Cupid!
Why how the boy has grown! (*Aloud.*) Is she your
"Ma?"

PRINCE DOODLE. Alas, sweet maid! I am a norphan!
(*sighs*) Ah!
With ne'er a *parent,* we're a *pair rent,* too.

MONA. You have my sympathy, what can I do!
(*Aside, holding hand to heart.*)
Dear me! That queer sensation's come again!

PRINCE DOODLE. Your sympathy, *see, mends* an
orphan's *pain,*
My *loving, lass!*

MONA. Your *glass*, I'd mend, Prince, but I
Regret I've neither got *cements* nor putty.

PRINCE DOODLE. Say, could you learn to love?

MONA. (*Innocently.*) You'll teach me your way?

PRINCE DOODLE. It's plain! No doubt it's much the same in Norway.

(*He puts arm round her waist and is going to kiss her, when he looks off L.*)

See! yonder comes a *N'orse-man* on an *'orse!*

MONA. Oh! Let us fly! The Gnome King!

PRINCE DOODLE. Fly! Of course
If you'll fly with m , dear, we'll never part.

MONA. (*Aside.*) I've just discovered that I've got—a heart!

(*Exeunt through opening at back R. U. E. Enter L. 2 E. The Gnome King on a rocking horse, attended by Rooster the Audacious, General Bounce, and Captain Pounce.*)

GNOME KING. Whoa! Steady, boy! Here take this beast away
And stuff his mouldy ribs with ancient hay.
(*exit R.U.E. Captain Pounce with horse; he returns front*) The only steed in all our royal stable;
We'd keep a dozen were we only able.
The times are hard and out of joint 'tis clear.
We're out of *joints* ourselves—and beer,
Ha! ha! (*to Rooster.*) Why can't you laugh? Ha! ha!

ROOSTER, (*feebly,*) He! he!

G. KING. What mean these looks, you're very grave, I see.
Well, let's to business. What are all these matters?
We want some coin, our robes are torn to tatters.
(*seats himself on rock. R.*)
Let's hear the worst. Produce your budget, quick!
Bring lights! Pray what's the price of candles, *stick?*
(*Rooster aside.*) There's not a candle left. (*aloud*) It's nearly morning.
(*aside*) What shall I say. (*aloud*) Sir, see the day is dawning.
(*Stage gradually grows light.*)

G. KING. Well, how's the Exchequer?

ROOS. Empty.

G. KING. Stock it.

ROOS. I've eighteen pence, sir, in my waistcoat pocket.
It's pretty clear we must increase taxation.

G. K. We'll tax the gnomes of each denomination.

ROOS. They're taxed already, sir, wholesale and retail.

G. K. Tax them some more.

ROOS. But how?

G. K. Well, that's a detail.
Taxes Tax every thing and every body,

Toffee and tubs, ice cream and whiskey toddy.
Tax folks who fish—for compliments or salmon.
Lay taxes on their corns for shooting,

ROOS. (*aside*) Gammon.
You're pleased to joke. The situation's grave.

G. K. And so am I. I'm quite in earnest, slave.
Then, tax the air they breathe, the *airs* they hear,
And tax their wives, it's right *they* should be *dear*.
Tax all pet oysters, sprats and whales they're keeping.
Tax 'em for eating, drinking, also sleeping.
Tax them besides for laughing, singing, crying.
And lay a heavy tax on folks for *dyeing*.
Put taxes on the nation's food and fuel,
From turtle soup, to grits for babies' gruel.
Stay, here I have it! why, of course, you gabies
You'd make a fortune by a tax on babies.

GENERAL BOUNCE. (*hesitatingly*) Can't we economise, that's my suggestion,
What's Toby and what's not Toby's the question?

G. K. Well, how's the army? can we cut it down?
Make sixpence go as far as half a crown?

G. BOUNCE. One General, (*points to self,*) and one Captain of the forces.
(*Points to Captain Pounce.*)
An inefficient staff, sir, that of course is;
Of cavalry we've none.

G. K. The "Ryle Artilerce?"

G. B. Burst up.

G. K. The Infantry ?

G. B. All here you see.
(*Enter* NOODLE, *as full private, toy gun, bayonet fixed.*)
But he's a big one. Pray don't mention halving;
I grieve to say it, but the army's—

NOODLE. (*Sepulchrally.*) Starving !

G. K. Here's insurrection ! mutiny ! revolt !
I'm not afraid, but p'raps I'd better bolt.

(ROOSTER, GENERAL *and* CAPTAIN *run off, R.*)

G. K. Here officers, on your allegiance stay,
Protect your monarch now, don't run away !

(*Runs off R.*)

NOODLE. (*C. leaning on gun.*)
I must confess. I think it's rather hard.
For sixteen weeks I've been here, mounting guard.
I've eaten nothing but a rind of cheese,
And that wont help a man to "stand at ease."
I never get to mess, but into *messes,*
The General's joint is when the loine he dresses.
That's not the worst; it's more than I can bear,
To hear the little beggar cry "form square !"
One into four, won't go. He says it will.
Nothing goes into *me* I know, but *drill.*
From morn till night he has me on my legs,
He'll wear them off "as sure as eggs are eggs."

He talks of "*wings*," as if I were a bird.
"By your left wheel!" he cries. The thing's absurd.
I d like to know why should I *buy* a *wheel*!
If I had any cash I'd buy a meal.
I'll strike. Along the shore, I'll take a stroll,
Perhaps the waves will give a nice fresh roll.
A witch foretold that here I'd meet my brother.
Alas, I fear we should not know each other.
I'll put a board up, that will do to tell.

(*Gets a piece of plank and writes on it in chalk.*
"*Dere brother I am hear close buy.*
Yours,
NOODLE.
To MISTER DOODLE. *Places board against rock, R.C.)*

It's fortunate at school I learnt to spell.

(*Exit* NOODLE, L. U. E.

(*Re-enter cautiously,* KING, ROOSTER, GENERAL *and* CAPTAIN R.)

G. B. The army's disinfected!

G. K. What's the reason?

ROOSTER. Off without *leave*, he's gone.

G. BOUNCE. No *leaf*! it's *tree's*-on!

G. K. Pray cease your jokes, we have no time for fun.
This is an unkind *cut*, much over done.
The army gone! Say, is there further ill?

ROOSTER. Allow me to present your tailors' bill.

(*Unfolds long roll of bill which runs out on the floor.*)

G. K. It must be done. A plan I'll now unfold,
To fill our empty purse once more with gold.
Stay! Are we quite secure?

(*Business; each going on tip-toe to R. and L. entrances, listening and returning with exaggerated melodramatic action. Music, soft chords. Stacato.*)

One word! I love!

(*Loud chord, all start.*)

ROOSTER. (*Enquiringly*). Thou love'st?

G. BOUNCE. (*Suspiciously.*) He loves.

CAPTAIN POUNCE. (*Confidentially.*) We love!

ROOSTER. (*Surprised.*) Ye love!

G. KING. (*Disgusted.*) They love!

My love's *declined* with thanks. Alas, it's true,
Kings are but mortals, and I love like you.

ALL. The maid?

G. KING. A mermaid. Nay, you should'nt start,
A mermaid, like a cabbage, has a heart.
I offered her my hand; in it the key
That opened locks to all the treasury.
My mountain diamond mines! my gold! I rave!

G. B. She took it?

G. KING. Yes, and flung it in the wave.
Since then, you know, I've not been worth a pin;
The rocky doors are closed, I can't get in.
Listen. Next time she comes to land, we'll seize her.

And till she fetches back that key, I'll tease her.
Hullo ! a step !

(*All hide, R. & L. Enter Prince Doodle off rock R.*)

DOODLE. Such fun ! the mermaid nation,
Is not averse, I find, from small flirtation.
We're getting on.

(*Sees board.*)

What's this ! What have we here ?

(*Reads notice aloud.*)

Joy ! joy ! So then my long lost brother's near.
He can't be far, (*calls*) Hi ! Noodle ! Noodle ! Noodle !

(*Exit R. calling* NOODLE. Enter MONA *at centre, she hesitates, looks round.*)

MONA. I wonder what's become of darling Doodle.

(*Comes down. G. King, and the others follow in stealthily ; the G. King has a v.il.*

We're playing hide and seek. It's charming play.
We play for kisses, and he always makes me pay.
I wonder where he's gone !

(G. KING *throws veil over her, she shrieks.)*
We'll hide you, miss;
Can't you afford to give a King a kiss ?

(*She struggles.*)

Unless you get my golden key so shiny,
You may as well say ta, ta, to the briny.

(*Scene closes in with view of the Cottage of the Maid of the Mill.*)

SCENE II.

COQUETTINA'S COTTAGE.

COQUETTINA *discovered looking at herself in a glass on L. wall. Arm chair with cover on, R. Cupboard, R. Door, L. Barrel against wall, L. Table with cover, C., candle burning on table.*

COQ. There, that will do, that's quite enough my dear.
Oh, Coquettina, you're a flirt, I fear.
You naughty, naughty girl to act this way.
Ah! you'll be very sorry, Miss, some day.
(*Comes down.*)
I'm sure it's not my fault. What can one do?
I dote on officers, and I've now got two.
The Captain's not amiss; a handsome face!
And such a uniform! Oh, I love gold lace.
His pay's so small—it's not a bit of use.
But then the General's such a dear—old goose.
He's rather short and fat, and slightly lazy,
His conversation's small; style, lackadaisy.
Still, who for *general* conversation cares?
Ah, stay, I hear him puffing up the stairs.

(*Seats herself hurriedly in chair, L., at back, and pretends to be asleep. Rap heard at door, L., repeated twice.* GENERAL BOUNCE *puts his head carefully into room.*)

G. B. What, not at home! (*Comes down.*)
These parlours in the sky
Are much like houses in Soho, *so high.*
I'm out of breath, and she's out too, it's clear,
I've had my climb for nothing. (*Sees Coquettina.*)
(*Approaching her*) Ah, she's here!
My dainty duck! my lamb, my tender chicken!
The cherries on those lips are worth the pickin'.
I must take one, though she may fume and flounce,
She'll not object as Mrs. General Bounce.
(*is about to kiss her, she starts up.*)

COQ. Ah, General! It's you?

G. B. (*confused*) I'm looking for—

COQ. your *gout*?
A *taste* of something good and nice,
Ah, *stout*?
I see it's *up*, (*Looking at him meaningly.*)
You'd better take it down,
(*Points to door.*)

GEN. B. Now what a tease you are! Come, do not frown.
Don't, Coquettina, of my love make light.
You leant upon my arm quite hard last night.
Say you'll be mine, come, Coquettina, do!
I am a single man.

COQ. You're big enough for two.
I've only one objection.

GEN. B. What is that?
Pray *lean* on me for life.

COQ. *Lean!* why, you're *fat!*

GEN. B. Call me not lean, but say I'm buxom, plump.
I am no scare-crow, made to run and jump.
To tell the *truth,* I like to take my ease,
I'm not a *skipper* with a load of *(f)* "*lees.*"
Oh, that this too, too solid flesh would melt
To less than sixty inches round the belt!

COQ. You can't help that, *'tis you.*

GEN. B. Well then, suppose
My *tissue is* inclined to *adipose.*
You could'nt *add a pose* with all that tissue.
'Twould be a *poser* if I were to kiss you.

COQ. Why what's *possest* the man? I'd like to see you!

GEN. B. Well, so you shall. Here goes! *(He attempts to chase her around stage, she easily eludes him. Knock heard at door.*

COQ. Oh, dear, oh, dear!
Mamma's come back! Quick, General, get in here.
(pushes him into cupboard, R. Business, he not liking to go in. Rap again.)
Meet me beneath the haunted tree to-morrow.

GEN. B. Adieu!

COQ. Pray go!

GEN. B. This parting's such sweet sorrow.

(*He goes into cupboard, crash of broken glass heard. He puts his head out again.*)

I've sat upon your glasses!

COQ. Take it easy.

My absence won't be long.

GEN. B. (*Sniffs about cupboard.*) Your *scents* are cheesy.

(*Exit into cupboard. She runs to door and opens it. Enter Capt. Pounce. She curtseys, and looks down demurely. He comes front, twirling his moustache.*)

CAPT. P. So this is where you live, child, is it, weally? You're up amongst the clouds here.

COQ. Yes, Sir, nearly.

CAPT. P. (*Gallantly.*) For such a chewub quite a pwoper place.

(*Aside.*) Upon my word, a vewy pwetty face!

(*Looks out of window at R.*)

And what a view! All twees and sheep in flocks,
And wolling waves awound those wugged wocks.

(*She is standing by him as he speaks the last words. He puts arm round her waist.*)

COQ. *That's* not a "wugged wock." Don't let it trouble you,

But have you such a thing as a spare W?

CAPT. T. Oh, weally, pon my life, you're vewy pwetty.

COQ. I thank you kindly, Sir.

CAPT. P. And weally witty.
Yes. If I'd got some place to which to cawwy you,
Upon my word I'd weally like to mawwy you.

COQ. (*Aside.*) The darling! He's a man a girl can love.

CAPT. T. (*Looking on ground.*) I fear I've lost it now.

COQ. Your heart?

CAPT. P. My glove.

(*Loud sneezing from cupboard.*)

What's that.

COQ. The ginger beer has burst a bottle.

CAPT. P. It sounded vewy like a human thwottle!

(*Rap heard at door.*)

COQ. Ah, here's mamma! quick, hide in this, now, see!

(*Puts him into barrel. Business.*)

To-morrow meet me by the haunted tree.

(*Throws cloth over top of barrel.*)

I'll have such fun to-morrow for an hour.

CAPT. P. (*Rising*). Look here, I say, this bawwel's full of flour!

(*She runs to him, forces him back and puts coverlet on again. Rap again. She goes to door and opens it.*)

(*Enter* ROOSTER THE AUDACIOUS, *a big bundle of papers tied with red tape, under his arm.*)

ROOS. Miss Coquettina, is your Ma'. within ?
(*Pulls out enormous watch from fob pocket.*)
I've twenty minutes left to woo and win.

COQ. To woo and win ! Upon my word that's funny!

ROOSTER. Business is business, Miss, and time is money.
All night I sat up on affairs of State.
I had to shave the King at half-past eight.
At nine to black his boots and brush his hair.
By ten, as President, I took the chair
Of the Society for Reforming Cats—
R. S. R. C. At twelve I sat on " Hats."

COQ. Hats !

ROOS. Yes, and hatters, 'twas a much *felt* question.
At one I had some lunch, and—indigestion.
At two I had to meet a deputation—
" Was it, or was it not, good for the nation
That folks should be allowed beef with their mustard,"
It was a serious matter.

COQ. Were you flustered!

ROOS. Oh, not at all, I said—If they could get it.
At two 'twas going on.

COQ. So's time.

ROOS. Well, let it!
Till eight—three meetings ; a foundation stone.

Then dressed the King for dinner; had my own.
Came here to pop the question—Will you wed?
I must get back to put the King to bed.
Say yes or no.

COQ. You'd better ask mamma.
(*Rap at door.*)
Not now! Some other time!

ROOS. Yes! Now!

COQ. No!

ROOS. Bah!

COQ. She may be angry. Get beneath the table.
Please. To oblige me. (*loud rap.*)

ROOS. Well, if I am able.
(*Gets under table.*) I must confess I feel how ill you treat me.

COQ. To-morrow, by the haunted tree you'll meet me.
(*Goes to door and opens it. Enter* G. KING. *She curtseys. He chucks her under chin.*)

GNOME KING. Well, lass, your pretty face I've long been missing.
You've got a kiss I hope—

COQ. (*Coquettishly.*) It's always kissing.
Just like a man! He always *misses* kisses.

G. KING. It's very hard a man can't kiss his *misses*.
I'll have your little head chopped off, Miss! Pray
Don't make me angry! One! two! three! Away!

COQ. Well, if you must, you must then; Take it. There!

(*She turns back of head to him as he is about to kiss her.*)

What did it taste of *eh* Sir?

G. KING. *Hay?* No! *Hare!*

COQ. Of course! It's all my own.

G. KING. Oh, *game* you're making!

COQ. Oh, not at all, Sir, *I* don't go *hay raking.*

G. KING. A kiss I'll have!

(*Runs after her, catches her, and is going to kiss her, when loud rap is heard at door.*)

COQ. Mamma!

G. KING. I'd like to choke her.

COQ. Dear me! She's awful with the kitchen poker! You'd better hide, Sir.

G. KING. Where? (*Runs to cupboard.*)

COQ. No, no! (*he runs towards barrel.*) Not there! (*He runs to table.*) I have it! Here! pretend to be a chair.

(*She takes cover off chair and puts it over him with arms extended so that he looks like a chair.*)

There! Now you're safe, you need'nt now be daunted.
Meet me to-morrow by the tree that's haunted.

(*Goes to door, opens it and looks out.*)

What! no one here? how strange! who can it be?

Perhaps I'd better go outside and see.

(*Goes outside. The "Fairy of the Forest" steps in and closes door.*)

FAIRY. Ah, Coquettina! oh, you naughty child!
In spite of all I've said, you *will* be wild.
All right, Miss, I have such a rod in pickle!
But first these gentlemen in here I'll tickle.

(*Blows out candle. Stage darkens. She goes to cupboard and raps gently, then to barrel, then to table, then to chair, and steps to back of stage. All four come out and grope in the dark, avoiding each other. They speak in whispers.*)

GEN. B. Here, Coquettina!

CAPT. T. Deawest!

ROOSTER. Where are you?

KING. Come to my arms, my Coquettina, do!

(*They all get into a circle in front of stage, each holding a hand of the other. The fairy laughs, claps her hands, and fairies enter with lanterns hung at the end of their wands. Stage lights up. Quick curtain.*)

SCENE III.

THE FOREST DELL.

Haunted tree C. at back. A large rock at R. of tree, upon which NOODLE *is seated.*

NOODLE, (*Sneezing.*)
I've got a frightful cold. My M's and B's
Are all mixed up, likewise my L's and D's.
That Gnome King there, Oh, isn't he a beauty!
Because, he said, I ran away from duty.
Fixed me by some enchantment to this stone,
And here he's left me ever since, alone.

(*Takes bottle from pocket.*)

Strolling the other day upon the sand, I
Found this. B. R. A. N. D. Y. spells brandy.
It isn't bad, though how did it come here?
There's been a shipwreck, that is very clear.
The country's full of geese, too, it's absurd!
Which ever way I turned I found a bird,
All dressed in sailor's jackets, caps and things,
With spy glasses stuck underneath their wings.

(*Enter* MONA L. *running.*)

MONA. There, I've escaped them! Now to find the shore,
I don't think they will catch me any more.

(*Moves toward tree.*)

It must be this way, I can scent the sea.
Ah! Who are you, sir, under that old tree.

NOO. Don't be afraid, fair maid, I cannot harm you;
Glued to this stone these *tones* need not alarm you.
I can't get up (*tries to rise.*)

MONA. Why not?

NOO The Gnome has tied me.

MONA. You have a story. Tell me.

NOO. Sit beside me.

(MONA *sits on rock other side of tree.*)

Long years ago I was a boy.

MONA. How strange!

NOO. A little tiny boy, so high.

MONA. A change!

NOO. I had an uncle, and I *was* a prince.
My father died. *He* seized the throne.

(MONA *starts,*) You wince.

MONA. Oh not at all. Go on! I've heard a tale.
Like your's before. It's very like a whale.

NOO. My tail! there's more behind. He then seized *me*

And shipped me off, a little boy, to sea.
For many years I've wandered as a sailor,
And earned my salt as cook on board a whaler.
Shipwrecked upon this most unkindly shore,
I've lived a wretched life ten years or more.
The manikins who live down there below,
Took me, and made me giant in a show:
"Walk up! walk up! just going to begin."
(*imitates Showman*)
That's what they used to say to bring folks in—
"This giant is all real, no sawdust here!"

MONA. Made you a giant, did they. That was queer.

Noo. "There's no deception, gents! no pads or straw!"
And then they'd pinch my legs to make me roar.
Stick pins into my calves.

MONA. Oh, that was cruel.

Noo. And if I would't act they'd stop my gruel.
Well, now I've joined the army, serve the nation.
That means long drills, stiff collars and starvation.
I'll make a raft or boat, and get away,
So sure as my name's Noodle, miss, some day.

MONA. What name?

Noo. Why, Noodle,

MONA. Noodle?

Noo. Why not Noodle?

MONA. You have a brother?

Noo. Which his name is Doodle.

(*Tries to rise.*)

Say, have you seen him? Is my brother here?

MONA. He is.

Noo. And I can't leave my stony '*cheer*.'

MONA. I'll go and seek him. (*Exit R.*)

Noo. Stay! She's gone. What joy!
I havn't seen my brother since a boy.

(*Enter* DOODLE *hurriedly, L.*)

DOODLE. I've lost my mermaid! (*Sees* NOODLE.) Ha!
Pray who are you?

Noo. (*Aside.*) Is this my brother? Is your name, Sir, Doo—?

Doo. It's Noodle! (*Is going to rush towards him, but stops short suddenly.*)
Come though, this won't do I say,
We must'nt take things in this easy way.
Although perchance we may have had the same aunt.
There may perhaps, Sir, be another "Claimant."
I'd like to ask a question.

Noo. Ask a dozen.

Doo. Pray, had your nurse, Sir, in the Guards a "cousin?"

Noo. 'Tis strange, but true.

Doo. 'Tis well! When you were able
You kicked you poor old pa beneath the table?

(NOODLE *nods,*)

Say, did you once, upon your nurse's lap,
By chance capsize a teaspoonful of pap?

Noo. I did! I did! The circumstance pecoolia,
I now recall it. Which her name was Julia.

Doo. Did you like sugar on your bread and butter?

(NOODLE *nods.*)

Used you to play at marbles in the gutter?

Noo. I must confess it.

Doo. Now I think upon it.
Had you a bouncing B. once in your Bonnet.

Noo. I had! I have! In fact, as I'm alive,
Not one bee only but a perfect hive.

Doo. Have you on your left arm a strawberry mark?

Noo. A perfect bed! You'd see them in the dark.
'Tis he! 'tis he! My feelings I can't smother;
Come to my arms my lengthy long lost brother!

(NOODLE *tries to rise but cannot.*)

Why don't you rise?

Noo. I can't, the Gnome King's bound me.
I should have died down here if you'd not found me.

Doo. What's to be done? (*Trunk of tree opens, and discovers the Fairy of the Forest,*)

Fairy. Sprinkle him thrice, sprinkle him thrice,
With the water that trickles
And trickles and trickles
Down from the mountain
Here to the fountain.
Sprinkle and say,
One, two, three and away,
One, two, three and away.
(*Trunk of tree closes again.*)

Doo. Ah, here's the fountain, look !

(*Runs off, R., and returns with water in the palm of his hand. Throws it over* Noodle.)

One, two, three and away ! (Noodle *springs up. He limps. The brothers embrace.*)

Noo. I'm stiff as that old tree.

Enter Mona R., *carrying large gold key.*

Noma. You've found him, see ! Look here ! I've brought this key,
Key to the diamond mountain. Come ! be quick :
We'll play that dear old dwarf there such a trick.

Doo. We'll build a raft ; with diamonds fill each sack ;
Set sail before he knows—

Noo. And not come back.
But where's your crew ?

Doo. My crew ? Oh there's the rub,
I hav'nt got a crew to sail a tub.
A set of geese ! (*Trunk of tree opens and shows Fairy of the Forest.*)

FAIRY. Sprinkle thrice, sprinkle thrice.
And your geese, in half a trice
Will disappear, and on the land,
Four and forty sailors stand.
(*Trunk of tree closes.*)

DOO. A friend in need's a friend indeed they say.
Madam, we thank you. Come, friends, let's away.

NOO. Let's to the mountain; there our sacks we'll fill.
And get good fortune from a monstrous *ill*.

(*Exeunt, R., Trunk of tree opens. Fairy of the Forest descends, and comes forward.*

FAIRY. So far so good. Those captives stirred my pity,
And Maiden Mona is so good and pretty.
I hate that Gnome; he is so tough and tarty. (*looks off.*)
Here's naughty Coquettina and her party.
I'll sprinkle magic water on them all,
And where they stand they'll stay until I call.

(*She returns into tree, which closes. Enter L.* COQUETTINA *hurriedly. She looks back as she enters.*)

COQ. What fun! they're coming all together here.
I'll hide behind this tree. (*Trunk opens, Fairy appears and sprinkles her. She stops instantly.*)

FAIRY. You'll not, my dear.

(*Trunk closes. Enter R. and L.* KING, ROOSTER, GENERAL BOUNCE and CAPT. POUNCE. *Different entrances. Music soft and staccato. As they advance to centre, they see each other.*)

ALL. Hallo!

(*Fairy appears; sprinkles them. They stop short and each retains the position of the moment, Lime light. Scene closes in with cavern, same as scene 1st, only opening at back closed in. Several sailors cross the stage from L. to R., carrying sacks on their backs.* NOODLE *and* DOODLE *bring up the rear, each carrying a sack. They come front.*)

DOO. There! That's the last, the raft won't carry more.
And now set sail, and quit this unkind shore.
Where's Mona? (*Enter* MONA, R.)

MONA. Here. Please, dear, before we go,
I wish to say good-bye to friends below.

DOO. I'm not a fish!

MONA. It's done quite easily,
We'll sink this cavern down below the sea.

(*Enter L.* KING, ROOSTER, GENERAL BOUNCE CAPT. POUNCE, COQUETTINA.)

G. KING. Mind your own business, Miss, leave mine alone.
I have a charm will turn you all to stone.

(*Makes passes in the air. Enter L. Fairy.*)

FAIRY. If you're not good you'll get another sprinkle.

G. KING. I'd rather be a lobster or a winkle.

MONA. Then here's your key. Remember, don't be cruel.

Noo. And feed your army. Give your giants gruel.

MONA. We're going down. D'ye feel the motion?

Doo. Well!
It's easy as a lift in some hotel.

(*All give a slight jump as though the bottom had been reached.*)

MONA. We're there at last. Now let the water in.
Don't be afraid, you will not wet your skin.

(*Scene at back and sides gradually opens to soft music, and shows the*

MERMAID'S HAUNT.

(CORALINA *descends in a coral car at back. Mermaids R. and L.*)

COQUETTINA. This is my home. Good-bye, dear friends, to-night,
And don't forget your little Mermaid quite.

FAIRY OF THE FOREST. The bottom of the sea! It's like a dream.

COQ. You've no society down here.

MONA. The very cream.

COQ. Perhaps it's iced. I'm sure its very chilly.

GEN. BOUNCE. It's all *cold cream*, of course, you little silly!

MONA. I hope you're all content.

NOODLE. Well, I don't know.
Poor Coquettina here—

DOODLE. Pray, where's her beau ?

(*Coquettina turns to Captain Pounce.*)

CAPTAIN P. Ah ! Weally sowwy ! Can't be done I fear,
When my superior officer is here.

(*She turns to General Bounce.*)

GEN. B. Well ! Hem ! The situation's most unpleasant,
But as for matrimony !—not at present.
Our friend here will oblige. Come, Rooster, say !

(*She turns to Rooster.*)

ROOSTER. Too busy, now. Pray call another day.

COQ. Oh ! very well ! I'm sure that I don't care.
I'll join the " Ladies Club." They've no men there !

G. KING. A gnome's *un homme* for all that. Here's my *key.*
C. flat's found often down below the *C.*
One thing I know, if once I get above,
No man shall say the Gnome is crossed in love.

GEN. B. A soldier's duty lies in drill and glory,
But as for love, well, that's another story.

CAPT. P. Well, weally ! Take things easy is my motto :
But fancy catching shwimps here in a gwotto !

(*Pretends to catch Shrimp swimming past.*)

DOODLE. (*Putting his arm round Mona's waist.*)
Though strange, a mermaid's heart I hold in hand!
My geese are changed to sailors; there they stand.
We've found the diamond mine—

NOO. And filled each sack.

DOO. And as for uncle (*Turning up Coat cuffs.*)

NOO. Wait till we get back!

MONA. Since all things wrong are now at last made right.
We only have to wish you all good-night.

(*Red and green lights.*)

CORALINA.

FAIRY OF THE FOREST.

GENERAL BOUNCE. CAPTAIN POUNCE.

GNOME KING. ROOSTER.

MONA. COQUETTINA.

DOODLE. NOODLE.

Curtain.

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